

# 9 Reasons a Staycation Just Might be the New Vacation

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We're all in need of a collective vacation and some serious self-care. Between work stress, family stress and health stress, taking a multi-week vacation to a far-flung destination may not be in the cards anytime soon. Many travelers are now turning to "staycations," vacations where you stay at home or nearby, to rest and recharge. A shorter trip closer to home — or even a staycation in your own backyard — offers many of the same mental and physical benefits as a traditional vacation, but with less stress and a lower price tag.

So is a staycation the new vacation? Perhaps! Here are a few benefits of staycations over vacations.

## Avoid Potential Travel Headaches

Staycations generally don't require early morning flights, long travel days or complicated trip logistics. With a staycation, the only thing standing between you and #staycationmode is an out-of-office reply (or perhaps just a short drive). In contrast, vacations often have a lot of hoops to get through before you can actually kick back and relax. And who wants to spend their precious vacation time jumping through hoops? According to the [U.S. Travel Association](#), the average American worker earned 23.9 days of paid time off in 2018 but used just 17.4 days. Planning a staycation may help you make the most of the paid time off you do earn.

## Minimize Contact Points

Now that we live in an era of contact tracing and social distancing, it's important to minimize the number of places we visit on a single trip. Vacation itineraries are often jam-packed with dozens of things to do and places to go, but a staycation itinerary can be blissfully simple. If you've ever needed a reason to sit by the pool all day or relax in a comfy hotel bed with no other plans, a staycation may be just the ticket. (For mask requirements in various cities and counties, check the [AAA COVID-19 Travel Restrictions map](#).)

## Stretch Your Travel Budget

Think about your average vacation budget and how much you spend on flights and baggage fees. With a staycation, you skip most of the transportation costs, which allows you to stretch your travel budget even further. Put that extra money toward an upgraded hotel room, a nice spa treatment or possibly an additional staycation later in the year. If

weather isn't an issue, plan your staycation for an off-season when hotel rates are lower.

## **Turn the Focus on You**

The beauty of a staycation is that you can tailor its purpose to your needs. Have you been spending too much time on the computer and your smartphone? Make the theme of your staycation a digital detox, with plenty of soul-nourishing activities and time spent outdoors. Is there a hobby you've been wanting to try? Bring supplies and use the change of scenery as inspiration to really dig in. Just remember: Laundry and other chores can wait until after your staycation ends.

## **Stay Outside Your Comfort Zone**

Hotels are typically just a means to an end on a busy vacation, but on staycations, you can put more importance on the place you stay. Whether your accommodations are a local resort with an amazing pool or a tent in your own backyard, consider a stay somewhere outside the norm.

## **Escape to Your Own Backyard**

Consider starting a new family tradition by hosting a backyard staycation. Invest in some camping gear, a fire pit and s'mores supplies, then pitch your tent out back. It's a good way to practice setting up your equipment without the pressure of being far from home and forgetting something crucial. Plus, you'll have all your creature comforts nearby.

## **Bring Your Pets Along**

If saying the word "vacation" in your household is associated with a trip to the dog kennel, your four-legged family member will definitely appreciate a staycation where they can come along. Find a pet-friendly hotel or campground near you with the [AAA Pet Travel](#) website. Many nice resorts have pet-friendly rooms, so you can relax at the pool and know that your pet is safe and sound nearby.

## **Play Tourist in Your Own City**

Busy schedules and daily routines don't leave much time for exploring new places or businesses around our own hometowns. A staycation is as good an excuse as any to finally check things off your tourist to-do list. Wander a nearby historic district, visit local parks, ride your bike somewhere you've never been before, visit a U-Pick farm or try out a new yoga studio. Brainstorming staycation ideas can be as simple as opening a [map](#) and seeing what's nearby.

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